Symbolic Representations of Maidan in the Ukrainian and Polish Press: Comparative Analysis

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Abstract:

This research proposes the comparative analysis of the symbolic representations of Maidan in the Ukrainian and Polish media outlets that comprise tabloid and quality publications. Different types of symbols are identified in the news analysis, reports, and feature stories on Maidan. The typology of symbols is worked out on the basis of the Cassirer's philosophy of symbolic forms and Langer's symbol theory. The coded types of symbols include symbol-products, symbol-concepts, symbol-slogans, symbol-situations, symbol-processes, and symbolic actions. With the help of the content analysis it is found that some most visible symbols in the media coverage of Maidan coincide in the Ukrainian and Polish print media. These are the symbol-concept "barricade", the symbol-concept "Berkut", and the symbol-process "dispersal of Maidan". However, there are symbols that have either quantitative or qualitative significance in the Polish press and are absent in the Ukrainian media at all, namely, the symbol-product "blood", the symbol-concept "solidarity", the symbol-concept "freedom".

Keywords:
symbolic representation, Maidan, tabloid, quality press, symbol-product, symbol-concept, symbol-slogan, symbol-situation, symbol-process.
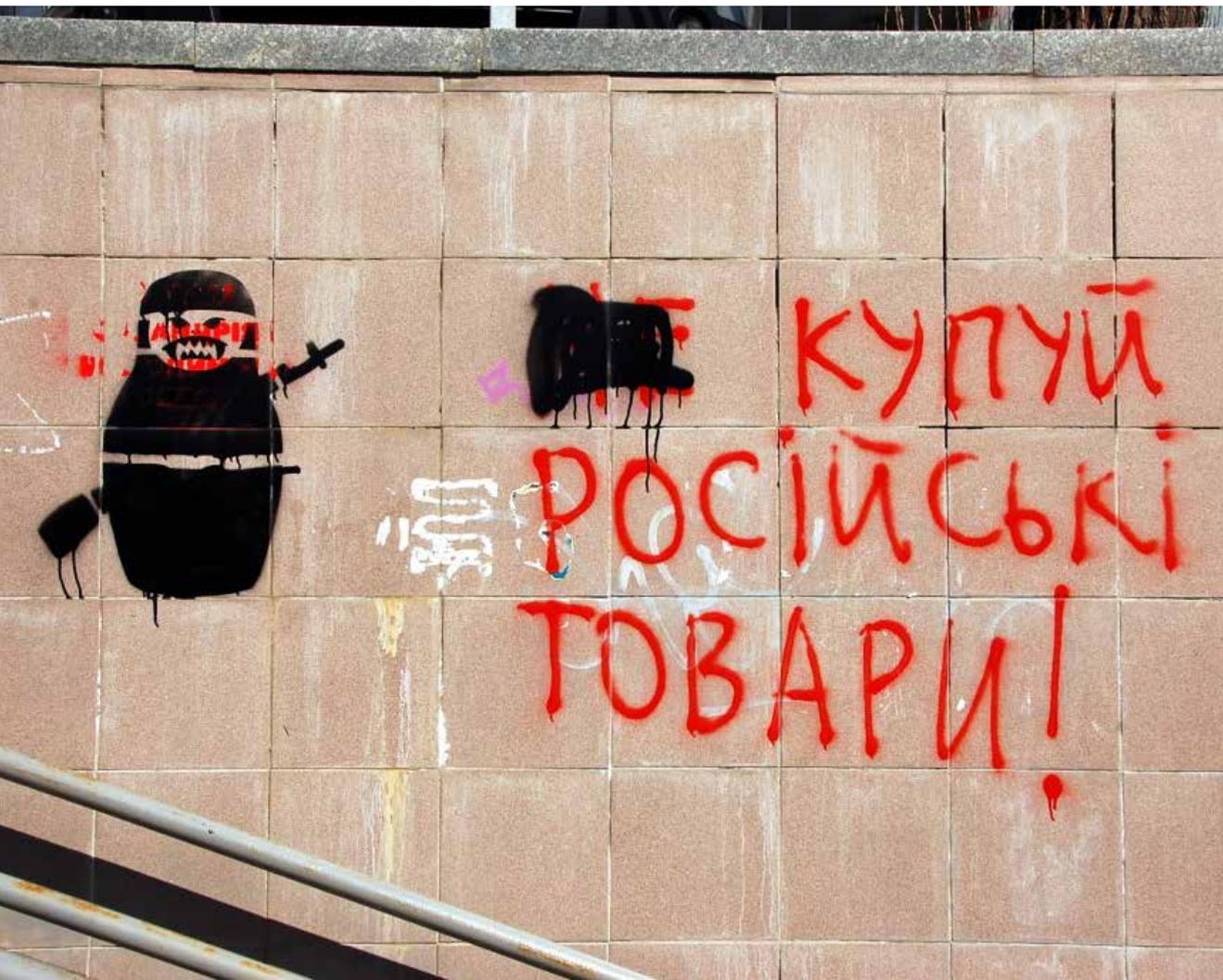
Introduction

The proposed research aims to descend into the meanings that the media of Ukraine and Poland conveyed in their coverage of Maidan. According to the American communication theorist James Carey, the task of cultural studies as well as media studies as its integral part is (…) *to diagnose human meanings* (…) *by descending deeper into the empirical world* (Carey, 2009, p. 43). The typical range of possible interpretative devices for this purpose comprises frame analysis, different variations of discourse analysis, description of characteristics of cultural representations, analysis of media templates, news icons, symbolic actions. We attempt to revive for the same kind of analysis the concept of symbol with its focus on micro-meanings. The proposed research design is based on the symbol theory of Susanne Langer that, in its turn, goes back to the philosophy of symbolic forms by Ernst Cassirer, as well as to the American analytical philosophy. This theoretical approach sees symbol as a primary bearer of meanings, namely, explicit denotations, implicit connotations, and conceptual significations. The foundational difference between symbol and any other arbitrary meaning is the former's reference to some universal law, norm, trend. Susanne Langer (1954) claims that people generally think *in* symbols and *with* symbols. The comparison of two contexts – Ukrainian and Polish – neighboring geographically, historically and culturally, could help to investigate to what extent proponents of symbol theories are right claiming that we could not understand culture and society without understanding its dominant symbols. From their point of view, symbols unite different cultures, as well as demarcate them. If we detect similarities of symbolic representations in the Polish and Ukrainian contexts, it is the general confirmation of these claims. It is also important to

diagnose the points of divergence in meanings of the same symbols in different cultural contexts. Maidan is a critical case to test what symbols the Polish and Ukrainian media "think *in* and think *with*".

Theory

The scholars worked out a number of concepts that help to grasp meanings in media: "simulacrum" (Baudrillard, 1994); "media templates" (Kitzinger, 2000); "cultural resonance" (Wolfsfeld, 1997); "citationality" (Derrida, 1978); "social performance" (Alexander & Mast, 2006); "news icon" (Perlmutter & Wagner, 2004); "pretext" (Taylor, 1994); "media ritual" (Couldry, 2003). Studying meanings researchers often conduct analysis of frames.

Ernst Cassirer's philosophy of symbolic forms (1923; 1925; 1929) provokes an ongoing discussion of its applicability and adequacy for the contemporary analysis of cultural meanings through vehicles of symbols as they are understood in phenomenology, in general, and in the critique of culture, in particular. Some authors argue that the Cassirer's philosophical project is exhausted (Svasian, 2010; Minakov, 2007). Svasian (2007) sees the philosophy of symbolic forms as one of the very last meaningful evidence of philosophical tradition of the West before its decline. Minakov (2007) argues that the neo-Kantian philosophical project found its finalization in the philosophy of symbolic form. Ricoeur (1965) criticizes Cassirer for providing overbroad definition of symbol that comprises all forms of synthesis of expressive and intuitive sense-data.

Recki (2004) tries to reinvigorate Cassirer's philosophy by conceiving it as the critique of culture as praxis. This author pays a lot of attention to the rediscovery of the ethical and moral foundations in the Cassirer's approach to symbolic forms. Recki concludes that Cassirer asserts the possibility of objectivity of moral judgments; the criterion for the objectivity in

praxis is, according to Cassirer, "unity and universality" (Recki, 2004, pp. 156–157). Moreover, "the symbol itself has a liberating (…), ethical power" (Skidelsky, 2011, p. 126).

Skidelsky (2011) optimistically argues that (…) *recent years have seen a long-overdue recognition of Cassirer's originality; it is no longer possible to dismiss him as a "mere" neo-Kantian* (Ibid., p. 48). Skidelsky (2011) assumes that for Cassirer it was a question of principle to preserve a link with the philosophical and cultural traditions in the broadest sense.

This approach of Cassirer brought him a name of "the last philosopher of culture". He represents the humanistic philosophical tradition that is centered around belief in the liberating power of culture and around the notion of succession and tradition. The history of the 20th century provided a lot of dismantling theories that reflected on devastating empirical data (two World Wars, Holocaust, Holodomor, etc.). Contemporary post-structuralism revealed power relations that saturate any symbolic representations. The latter could lead to the symbolic domination and violence rather than freedom and objectification of any human cognition.

In contrast to Cassirer's foundational acceptance of tradition, succession, the whole[1], cultural entities, symbolic formation, the discursive analyses, namely, those by Michel Foucault (2012), promoted disruption of tradition, dissemination, discursive fragmentation, cultural disparities, disintegrated elements, symbolic deformation, etc. At the backdrop of these trends and innovative intellectual spirit, the Cassirer's critique of culture could be seen as old-fashioned neo-Kantian theory, although, at the same time, after a certain

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1 The Cassirer's Whole (das Ganz) should not be understood as "the substance of the cosmos. By the Whole he often means der Geist as "the immanent principle of human culture" (Skidalsky, 2011, p. 105).

historical circle it looks more like an alternative, especially in its reconsidered, modernized versions that could combine post-structural interpretative devices with modern symbol theories (Goodman, 1988). The latter draw on Cassirer's understanding of plurality of meanings with regard to different systems of description and symbolization. If the study of meanings, inter alia meanings in media texts and visuals, are restricted to the deconstruction of power relations with their arbitrariness of any foundations and to the analysis of discursive disruptions, the humanistic tradition gets totally lost and devalued that would cause one-sidedness of the whole scientific process and deprive it of the plurality of views and balance. So, the given media research is an attempt to reinvigorate the cultural humanistic tradition in the realm of media studies.

The other authors find the epistemological potential for the operationalization of the Cassirer's symbol theory (Langer 1954; Hamburg, 1956; Feron, 1997; Janz, 2001). Some authors that see the potential for the revival of the Cassirer's philosophical project put emphasis on its notions of objectivity and self-liberation of a person's spirit *through* the culture and *in* the culture (Recki, 2004; Skidelsky, 2011). Any clear and rigorous thinking, in terms of Cassirer's theory, could find its foundation only in symbolism and semiotics (Svasian, 2010, p. 74).

If we have to answer the framework question why it is necessary and important to study symbols in culture, inter alia in media, we can refer to Ferretti's and Pierce's explanation: (…) *The symbol makes that world manifest in the light of unity and relation* (Ferretti, Pierce; 1989, p. 123). The dictionary's definition of symbol says that it is either an equivalent of a sign or a concept that means the ability of material things, events, and sensuous images (visual and audible) to convey some special ideal

sense – meaning that differs from their perceptible being (Symbol, 2005, p. 180).

A term "symbol" has multiple semantic meanings in the Cassirer's writings. We can propose a few definitions of Cassirer's symbolic and symbol.

Ferretti and Pierce (1989) point out that (…) *the entire world of the mind is defined and revealed, represented and made unitary, in the concrete tangible symbol* (Ibid., p. 116).

Carl Hamburg (1956) argues that (…) *symbols are not to be taken as "mere figures which refer to some given reality by means of suggestion or allegorical renderings, but in the sense of forces, each of which produces and posits a world of its own* (Ibid., p. 40).

Svasian (2010) claims that the Cassirer's symbol could be defined as a (…) *sensuous embodiment of the ideal* (Ibid., p. 32) that is simultaneously subjective as a model of reality and objective as a sense-endowment (Ibid., p. 16). Any symbol in cultural studies should be seen rather as an action than as an end-product.

Verley (2013) concludes that by symbols Cassirer means sensible signs and images that substitute presented matter and data and constitute a representation which is preceded by a synthesis when an appearance becomes a phenomenon and an object becomes represented due to an immediate activity of a mind subsuming particular under universal (Ibid., p. 12).

One of the most self-sufficient and influential reconsiderations of the Cassirer's philosophy could be found in Susanne Langer's book *Philosophy in a New Key* that was first published in 1942. Symbolism is conceived by Langer as a key to the understanding of the mechanics of making meanings out of dispersed and disintegrated sense-data. While Cassirer was criticized for vagueness of definitions and too broad scope of his symbol's conception (Ricoeur, 1965), Langer delivers prudent, clear-cut working-out of basic concepts needed to

undertake any empirical analysis of symbols, inter alia symbols in media, and she does it from the point of view of symbolic forms and phenomenological conception of representations. So, it has a special epistemological value for the given research.

For Langer a person has need in symbolization, and it is one of human primary activities to refer to things that are absent with the help of symbols (1954, pp. 24, 32) . She conceptualizes symbols as (…) *vehicles for the conceptions of objects* that allow to retain things (events, facts, situations, processes) for later references, considerations, comparisons, memorizing, living through:

To conceive a thing or a situation is not the same thing as to "react toward it" overtly, or to be aware of its presence. In talking about things we have conceptions of them, not the things themselves; and it is the conceptions, not the things, that symbols directly "mean." (1954, p. 49)

In order to understand how Langer arrives at this definition, it is necessary to look at her conception of sign. A sign is composed of sign as such, an object (thing, event, condition) which it signifies, and subject that is a reference to something beyond an object (the past, the future, the context of events, etc.) (Langer, 1954, p. 46). A sign and an object are paired together, and a subject enters into the relations with them as an entity but at the same time it has relations with each of them individually. So, a sign is a three-term item.

In a typical sign-function there are three terms: subject, sign, and object. In the simplest type of symbol – denotation – there are four essential terms: subject, symbol, conception, and object (Ibid., p. 52). According to Langer, there are three different types of symbol's "meanings": signification, denotation, and connotation (Ibid., p. 52). Denotation is an explicit

meaning of symbol. Connotation is its implicit associative meaning. Signification is a meaning that symbol regularly conveys and has conceptual rather than associative nature.

The philosopher distinguishes two fundamental types of symbolism: discursive and non-discursive, namely, presentational. Discursive symbolism is general and universal, it is actualized as soon as it is applied to the concrete sense-data, whereas non-discursive symbolism is specific and individualized, it motivates us to discern more general meaning out of the case (Langer, 1954, p. 232). Discursiveness is successive progress of meanings, presentational symbolism is characterized with simultaneity (Ibid., p. 78). We find discursive symbolism in language whose power is its capability to embody concepts not only of things, but of things in combinations or situations (Ibid., p. 62). She calls it "situation-concept" or "symbol-situation".

Methodology

The overall goal of this research is to conduct cross-national, comparative quantitative analysis of the symbolic representations of Maidan.

The major research question of this dissertation is formulated as follows:

RQ: What symbolic representations of Maidan could be found in its tabloid and quality press coverage in the period between November, 21, 2013 and February, 27, 2014 across the Ukrainian and Polish media?

Drawing on the preliminary tentative research of the coverage of Maidan across a variety of the Ukrainian and Polish print, online, and visual media, as well as the author's experience as a journalist that covered Maidan as a RFE/RL reporter on the everyday basis within the whole period of November, 21, 2013 – February, 27, 2014, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H: Symbol-concepts, symbol-situations, symbol-processes are the most visible

among all types of symbols in the quality press while in the tabloids symbol-products are the most visible; meanwhile, symbol-concepts, symbol-situations, symbol-processes are either absent or marginalized.

The case study of Maidan is considered to be critical because these three-month protests of 2013–2014 at the central square of Ukraine have the features that are the most attractive for media in such events and processes: violence, deviance, drama, and spectacle (DeLuca &Peeples, 2002, p. 860).

Maidan, or, as it was defined initially Euromaidan, is a grassroots pro-European movement that rose up in protest against the Ukrainian ex-president Viktor Yanukovych's attempt to revoke the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU in November 2013. It received a form of the stationed tent camp with the stage and various self-organized services (kitchen, health care, self-defense) at the central square of Kyiv – Maidan.

In fact, Maidan has accumulated a multitude of civil initiatives, campaigns, protest actions, national gatherings (*narodne viche*), political opposition's activities, dramaturgical events, and violent clashes. It had gone through a number of different stages of development from the few thousand peaceful student protest to the violent and radical struggle with the riot police that culminated in the mass killings of protestors in clashes and by snipers. The latter are identified by now by the General Prosecutor's Office as the riot policemen Berkut. The mass killings took place in Mariinskyj Park, in the streets surrounding it, and in Maidan on February 18–20, 2014.

To study the symbolic representations of Maidan on a cross-country comparative scale we use the media sample of online editions of national press outlets. The media sample comprises quality as well as tabloid press. From each country under study, namely, Ukraine,

and Poland, one quality and one tabloid media outlet is chosen.

Among all quality dailies one with the largest readership in each respective country is chosen. For Ukraine this is the Russian-language daily newspaper "Segodnia" (Сегодня) that had the largest audience reach in the country during 2015 ("Newspaper Segodnia – Stable Leader", 2015). It is owned by the company System Capital Management which belongs to the Ukrainian mogul Rinat Akhmetov. For Poland the daily tabloid "Fakt" is chosen that has been the leading Polish tabloid since 2003 (Konopka, 2012, p. 63).

As a counterbalance to the leading national tabloids the leading quality weekly news-magazines are chosen for each country. The main criterion for their selection is the read-ership. In the Ukrainian case the additional criteria is the language of the publication. So, for Ukraine the Ukrainian-language news-magazine "Ukrainian Weekly" ("Український тиждень") is selected. For Poland the weekly newsmagazine "Polityka" is selected. This pub-lication is owned by the company founded by the journalists and publishing house workers themselves – Polityka Sp. z o.o. S.K.A.

The period of the given study coincides with the period of Maidan protests. So, it is proposed to focus on the media coverage of Maidan at the time when it unfolded. The gen-eral period of study is November 21, 2013 – February 27, 2014.

Types of symbols and criteria for their identification. Summing up and synthesizing the classifications of symbols proposed by Langer (1954), Hamburg (1956), Janz (2011) on the basis of the Cassirer's philosophy of symbolic forms, we underpin the following ty-pology of symbols for the analysis of symbolic representations:

▶ *Symbol-product* that is a material, physi-cal, tangible trace, namely, material things

and complexes of things that convey all three possible types of meanings: denota-tions, connotations, and significations. The things that have no connotation and no signification could not be defined as symbol-products.

▶ *Symbol-concept* that is close by its meaning to symbol-process. The major difference between symbol-process and symbol-con-cept is the reference to particular situations that help to grasp the commonly shared goals of parties involved in them. While symbol-process comprises a succession of such situations, symbol-concept focuses on the pure idea that is signified by a symbol or a complex of symbols in the totality of their ideal meaning.

▶ *Symbol-slogan* that is a slogan with mean-ings that could be understood either in deeper historical context or through the lenses of the general social critique of power. They are actively, repeatedly used by protesters.

▶ *Symbol-situation* that is an interaction of people within the framework of social world which becomes possible due to the exchange of symbols and combinations of symbols or due to the imposition of sym-bols and their combinations by power on its subordinates and its challengers.

▶ *Symbol-process* that is a succession of situations which are united with the com-mon goals. Although their participants could change each other, and their course could vary within certain period of time, the main integrating elements that make out of bunch of situations a process is the commonly shared goals of each side of the protest.

Two sets of criteria for the identification of symbols are proposed in the given research: the first set includes the possibility to single

out in a discursive wording or visual represen-tation (mainly photos) an object, a symbol-vehicle, a subject, a conception, and a concept; the second set of criteria includes the possibil-ity to discern in a discursive wording or visual representation all three types of meanings: denotation (explicit meaning), connotation (implicit associative meaning), signification (conceptual meaning).

Coding Procedure

This research is based on the content analysis of visibility of symbols in the overall amount of the coded symbols in news stories for each country under study. We use the individual Maidan news story as the unit of analysis and coding. The Maidan news story is defined as any news analysis, feature story or reportage whose dominant topic is Maidan protest ac-tions, Maidan's routine functioning, forecasts of its development, and/or its relations with power of Yanukovych's regime delimited from other news items by a change of topic. The Maidan news stories are identified with the help of key words in headings, subheadings, and leads that are typed in search engines of the online editions of media included in our sample. These words are as follows: Maidan, Euromaidan, civil protest in Kyiv, Ukraine, civil unrest, violence in Kyiv, Ukraine 2014. The major key words that in most cases allow to find all Maidan news stories in a respective online edition of a media outlet are Maidan, Euromaidan, and civil protest in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Measure of Content Analysis

This study uses one measure for the quantita-tive analysis: *visibility* of a particular symbol in the general amount of symbolic representa-tions. For each country under study the gen-eral amount of symbols in the media outlets is quantified, as well as the amount of symbols separately – in tabloid and quality press. We try

to quantify which particular symbols, as they are named and typified, dominate in symbolic representations of Maidan in the Ukrainian and Polish media.

Findings

We coded 29 news stories in the Ukrainian tabloid daily "Segodnia" and 33 news stories in the quality newsmagazine "Ukrainian Weekly". In the Polish press we coded 17 news stories in the tabloid daily "Fakt" and 6 news stories in the quality newsmagazine "Polityka". Overall, we coded 107 symbols of all types, except symbol-slogan, in "Segodnia" and 276 sym-bols of all types, except symbolic action, in "Ukrainian Weekly". Altogether 383 symbols were coded in two Ukrainian print media outlets. Within this number 127 different kinds of symbols were identified. It means that the same symbols were used two and more times. The news stories published at the web-site of "Fakt" often included video reports as integral parts and continuation of the written text. These video reports contain full-fledged narra-tion. So, they were considered to be the part of the written news story and coded, respective-ly. Overall, we coded 133 symbols of all types in "Fakt" and 106 symbols of all types, except symbol-slogan, in "Polityka". Altogether 239 symbols were coded in two Polish print media outlets. Within this number we identified 113 different kinds of symbols. So, some symbols were also used two and more times. While there are six basic types of symbols, every type might be presented by different kinds of symbols.

So, from the Table 1 we can see that our hypothesis is partly confirmed in the case of the Ukrainian print media: symbol-concepts, symbol-situations, symbol-processes are the most visible among all types of symbols in the quality press while in the tabloid symbol-products are the most visible; meanwhile,

symbol-concepts, symbol-situations, symbol-processes are either absent or marginalized. We managed to identify only four kinds of symbol-situation and four kinds of symbol-processes in "Segodnia": altogether four symbol-situations and ten symbol-processes were coded. In comparison, the coverage of the quality weekly for the same events and the same period included 23 kinds of symbol-situations and 11 kinds of symbol-processes: altogether 33 symbol-situations and 23 symbol-processes were coded. So, these data prove that, in general, tabloid press covers any social experience through physical objects, material products, some basic concepts of social life. However, it does not help people to get information-oriented understandings of situationality, historicity of experiences as well as processes. Only quality press is still able to trace down processes and develop journalism of processes.

It is noteworthy that symbols with the similar objects, symbol-vehicles and subjects are characterized with divergent conceptions and concepts in the Ukrainian tabloid and quality press. The most illustrative example is the symbol-concept "sociology of protest delegitimation" in the tabloid and the symbol-concept "sociology of protest legitimation" in the weekly. While the former used the sociological data as the symbols of lack of social representativeness in Maidan as the grassroots protest, the latter used comparably similar data to substantiate the social representativeness of the same protest.

The other example is the symbol-concept "compromise". It has different meanings in the Ukrainian tabloid and quality publications: for "Segodnia" this symbol means the unavoidable reconciliation between power and opposition in which protesters are, in fact, excluded as active actor, being represented as passive observers while for "Ukrainian Weekly" it means the unreachable, unattainable goals under the real life circumstances of Maidan. In the Polish press we coded two symbol-concepts with comparable meanings: the symbol-concept "compromise" and the symbol-concept "round table". "Polityka" writes about "compromise" as something that would lead to the reconciliation only if all demands of protesters are met, including snap presidential and parliamentary elections. So, it puts the special focus on the demands of protesters, their impact on the negotiations. The symbol-concept "round table" has the similar meanings and conveys the special reference to the historical experience of Poland where the peaceful democratic revolution culminated in the Round Table Talks between the trade-union "Solidarity" and communists in February-April 1989.

Table 1. The distribution of the coded symbols in the Ukrainian media.

	Media outlets	
Types of symbol	**Tabloid daily Segodnia**	**Quality newsmagazine Ukrainian Weekly**
Symbol-product	Strike fighters (2), smoke grenades, shields (4), siren, ambulance, explosion, fire, national anthem (2), injuries of Maidan activists, Grifon, Automaidan, Grushevskyj street (4), titushka (3), cocktail Molotov, internal troops (3), fighters with chains, tire, Institutska street (2), buses with black-out windows, flack jacket, stele (3), New Year's tree, flag of Ukraine, baton (4), tear gas (2), sonic grenade, construction helmet, barrel, firewood, sonic grenade, Mychailovska square/ Mychailovskyj cathedral, sandwich.	Baton (3), titushka (15), internal troops (6), tear gas (4), radical (3), national anthem (3), New Year's Tree on blood (2), sonic grenade, crowd of many thousands, construction helmet (2), sonic grenade (2), smoke grenade, splinters, balaclava (3), ambulance, injuries of Maidan activists, House of Trade-Unions (3), Lenin's monument, dispersal of Maidan, flag of Ukraine (2), piano, Institutska street (4), cocktail Molotov (5), presidential palace Mezhygiria (2), flag of the EU, Bankova street, Liadski Gates (2), Grushevska street (7), shield (4), laws of the 16th January (3), black helmet (3), tire, smoke (2), rubber bullets, flack jacket, Mariinka (2), buses with the detained protesters, tent, police snipers (2), first aid post (2), Antimaidan (3).
Symbol-concept	Lustration, sociology of protest delegitimation (2), astrological forecast, people's power, rebellion, civil activists (3), elite, Berkut (7), peaceful protesters, amnesty, compromise, foreigner at Maidan, barricade (6), European values, volunteer (2), negative energy, positive energy, cleansing (zachistka), European integration (2), Orange Revolution (2), people's gathering, rebellion, Heavenly Hundred.	People's gathering, Berkut (13), cleansing (3), European integration (2), European values, provocation (7), revolution (7), repression (9), disappointment of society (3), elite, barricade (11), Orange Revolution (3), sociology of protest legitimation, civil activists (10), compromise (3), social trust (2), elite, rebellion (2), people's gathering (2), consolidation of opposition, self-defense (6), art of Maidan, political prisoners, March of Millions, dignity (2), terror (2), amnesty, state of emergency (2), Automaidan, Heavenly Hundred (3), self-organization, victory (3).
Symbol-slogan		«Butcher to prison», «Zeka get» (3), «Glory to Ukraine» (2), «Drop in ocean».

Symbol-situation	Opposition leader is ignored and attacked by protesters; protesters demand a single leader; fighters attack empty parliament, night storm.	Storm of the presidential administration (2); Berkut hits a woman; riot police beats people lying on the ground (2); opposition calls people to move without goals; assaults on Maidan activists (4), opposition lost elections in four constituencies (3); repressions against Automaidan activists (3); titushkas attacked Forum of Euromaidans; Kruty battle; search of the journalist's apartment; Berkut beats a person with white flag lying on the ground; Berkut targets journalists in the Grushevskyj street; Berkut attacks the medical center in the Grushevskyj street; naked person tortured by police; women pick cobbles and bricks; negotiations between power and opposition (3); disappearance of Bulatov, the Party of Regions' office is set on fire (2); members of parliament save protesters beaten by the police; leader of the Party of Regions' fraction Oleksandr Yefremov says that he is not ashamed of killed protesters; deaths of protesters almost alive; the gangs of titushkas are headed by policemen; protesters demanded public repentance from PR politician Nestor Shufrych.
Symbol-process	Blocking of road, coming to the aid (2), singing together, dispersal of Maidan (6).	War with own people; slow investigation of assault on journalist Tetiana Chornovol (2), dispersal of Maidan (7); artists distribute tea, rebellion of regions (2); return to the 2004 Constitution (4); anti-terrorist operation (2), deconstruction of oligarchy; thousand people are coming to the place of Heavenly Hundred's death; trolling of Maidan in social media, resetting of the country.

Note. The figures in the brackets show the number of times that a particular symbol is used in a media outlet under study within the period under study.

From the Table 2 we can see that the hypothesis of the given research is not fully confirmed in the case of the Polish media: symbol-products, symbol-concepts, and symbol-situations of the protest are, generally, more visible among all types of symbols in both the Polish tabloid and quality publication. Symbol-processes are either absent or marginalized in "Fakt" as well as in "Polityka".

We managed to identify and to code 33 kinds of symbol-product, 18 kinds of symbol-concept, 21 kinds of symbol-situation, and just four kinds of symbol-processes in the tabloid. Meanwhile, in the quality press we coded 23 kinds of symbol-product, 22 kinds of symbol-concept, 18 kinds of symbol-situation, and just three kinds of symbol-processes.

Table 2. The distribution of the coded symbols in the Polish media.

	Media outlets	
Types of symbol	**Tabloid daily Fakt**	**Quality newsmagazine Polityka**
Symbol-product	Rubber bullets (2), sonic grenade, cobbles (2), cocktail Molotov (2), snipers of Yanukovych (2), blood (5), fire (3), shots, titushka (3), national anthem (2), Right Sector, Civil Council of Maidan, sandwich (2), hot tea (2), laws of the 16th of January, coffins, Committee of Support for Ukraine (2), balaclava, shield (2), flag of Ukraine (10), tent (4), barrel (2), tank, flag of the EU, New Year's Tree, crowd of many thousands (2), protesters with flags of Ukraine, smoke, faces of people, construction helmet, sack of snow, Automaidan.	Burnt police bus, cocktail Molotov (3), cobbles (2), tear gas (2), baton, rubber bullets, laws of the 16th January, tent, shield, construction helmet, Right Sector (2), shots, blood (2), snipers (2), baton (2), frost, presidential residence Mezhygiria (2), tire (2), smoke, titushka (2), flag of the EU, House of Trade-Unions, Lenin monument, Association Agreement (3), Instutytska street.
Symbol-concept	Berkut (7), civil war (wojna domowa), storm (3), March of Millions, sanctions, parallels with Ceaușescu, state of emergency, dismissal of Yanukovych, self-defense, barricade (7), freedom (3), round table (2), solidarity, struggle with totalitarianism, anti-terrorist operation (2), truce, revolution, provocation.	Compromise (2), state of emergency (2), Berkut (4), barricade (6), revolution (3), provocation, country's disintegration (2), amnesty, Orange Revolution (2), Moscow's embrace (2), snap presidential and parliamentary elections (3), divided opposition, multi-vector politics (2), political crisis, European standards, round table (2), self-defense (3), rebellion, truce, sanctions, self-organization, church.
Symbol-slogan	«Don't shoot in own people», «The Power of Bandukovych Away!» («Vladu Bandukovycha Get!»), «Gang Away!» («Bandu Get!»), «Police with People!».	

Symbol-situation	Berkut targets journalists, Yanukovych invites opposition to negotiations in which he does not participate; Berkut brutally dispersed attacks on presidential administration; Ukraine is bleeding (2); cleaning of Euromaidan; Yanukovych consults with Putin; people die in the streets; father holds the blue helmet of his son killed by a sniper; people with their cars bring medicine, water, food to Maidan; people come to the place where the history of their motherland changes; people ask to hold no negotiations with the criminal; Maidan is again full of people after killings; Polish minister of foreign affairs brought wounded protesters to Poland; dead bodies and blood but they dance; dead and wounded people lying on the ground (4);Lviv administration refuses to subordinate to Yanukovych's government; Automaidan activist Bulatov crucified; Polish reporter under bullets asks Berkut why it shoots in protesters; people are kidnapped from hospitals; prayer at Maidan; barricades are reinforced, assault on the journalist Tetiana Chornovol.	Opposition leader is ignored and attacked by protesters (2), six year old boy marches with toy saber; woman threatens police with her handbag; president did not address the nation; Ahmetov demands the crisis solution with people's involvement; Yuriy Verbytskyj found tortured and dead in forest; attacks on medical workers, journalists; people mock Yanukovych, people come «to defend children», beating of children, people threw away party emblems; Yanukovych did not address the nation; release of Yulia Tymoshenko, snipers shot in hearts, heads, backs; Ukrainians get up in a new country; the EU responded to Maidan only when the bloodshed occurred; Party of Regions condemned Yanukovych; Maidan self-defense stopped the car with Tymoshenko and Yatsenyuk to warn against traffic rules' breach.
Symbol-process	War with own people (2), return to the 2004 Constitution; dispersal of Maidan; singing together.	Dispersal of Maidan (4); people decide destiny of their country in streets; resetting the country.

Note. The figures in the brackets show the number of times that a particular symbol is used in a media outlet under study within the period under study.

We identified ten most visible symbols in the amount of 383 coded symbols in the Ukrainian media, namely, the symbol-concept "Berkut" (5,2 %), the symbol-product "titushka" (5 %), the symbol-concept "barricade" (4,5 %), the symbol-concept "civil activists" (3,4 %), the symbol-process "dispersal of Maidan" (3,4 %), the symbol-product "Grushevskyj street" (2,9 %), the symbol-concept "repression" (2,4 %), the symbol-product "shield" (2 %), the symbol-product "baton" (1,8 %), the symbol-concept "revolution" (1,8 %), and the symbol-concept "provocation" (1,8 %). The rest of symbols are coded six and less times. Such symbols as

"Berkut", "barricade", "civil activists" could be defined both as symbol-products and symbol-concepts. They fit all definitional criteria of symbol-product. However, from the general historical context of the protests as well as media texts under study we could assume that these symbols cross the boundaries of physical, material traces and get some conceptual meanings. In the Polish press the most visible symbols in the amount of 239 coded symbols are as follows: the symbol-concept "barricade" (5,4 %), the symbol-concept "Berkut" (4,6 %), the symbol-product "flag of Ukraine" (4,2 %), the symbol-product "blood" (2,9 %), the

symbol-product "tent" (2 %), the symbol-product "titushka" (2 %), and the symbol-product "cocktail Molotov" (1,7 %). The rest of symbols are coded four and less times.

Symbol is much narrower interpretative device than, for example, frame. In other words, it conveys micro-meanings while frame expresses dominant macro-meaning of the whole contexts and their interpretations. A developed and structured media text could contain numerous symbols. Consequently, their absolute number in any media sample could amount to hundreds and even thousands of symbols. In such samples the visibility of 4–5 % could be regarded as high.

So, three most visible symbols coincide in the Ukrainian and Polish press, namely, the symbol-concept "Berkut", the symbol-concept "barricade", the symbol-product "titushka". They all are indicative of conflict, its escalation, and violence. Meanwhile, such visible in the Ukrainian media symbol-concept as "civil activists" is at all absent in the coded news stories of the Polish press, as well as the symbol-concept "repression", highly visible in the Maidan coverage of "Ukrainian Weekly". The Polish media also use symbols of 'baton", "revolution", "provocation" that are highly visible in the Ukrainian press. However, they are less visible in the Polish publications.

There are two symbol-products "flag of Ukraine" and "tent" which are highly visible in the Polish media and used by the Ukrainian media, although they do not belong to the most visible symbolic representations in the Ukrainian press. This difference is mostly caused by much weaker and less frequent use of visuals – both photos and videos in online editions – by the Ukrainian publications. The high visibility of the "flag of Ukraine" in the Polish press is reached due to its presence in numerous visuals that "Fakt" runs along with textual elements of its news stories from Maidan. Moreover, the Polish media often

refer to the symbol-product "tent" in their texts whose connotations and signification could be defined as "long-standing protest" of people that stay in their positions day and night.

Overall, the symbols with openly negative connotations and significations related to violence and suppression dominate among most visible symbols in the Ukrainian media coverage of Maidan as well as in the Polish one: "Berkut", "titushka", "dispersal of Maidan", "repression", "baton", "provocation", "blood", "cocktail Molotov". It is noteworthy that "Segodnia" and "Ukrainian Weekly" do not use saliently the symbol-concept "blood" even reporting the violence and shootings of protesters by snipers that took place on February 18–20, 2014.The symbolic representations of these events in the Polish media have connotations of massacre (Polish word "masakra" is used). "Segodnia" and "Ukrainian Weekly" avoided such a connotation in their reports provided in the immediate aftermath of the deaths of protesters.

It is noteworthy that, although the Polish tabloids are criticized for oversimplification and commercialization that might lead to superficiality in the coverage of such complicated events as protests (Dobek-Ostrowska, 2011), "Fakt" provides the coverage with substantially more diversified, contextualized, fact-oriented, and elaborate symbols than the Ukrainian tabloid "Segodnia". While the Polish tabloid uses 25 symbol-situations, in the Ukrainian one we managed to code only four symbol-situation. "Fakt" focuses on the coherent factual story-telling based on eyewitness accounts and reports in the field while "Segodnia" utilizes such mythical or half-mythical story-telling as "astrological forecast", "tour around Maidan with specialist in human bio-energy" with the respective symbolism: the symbol-concept "astrological forecast" of the ending of Maidan without any outcomes and achievements by protesters, the symbol-concept "negative

energy" that dominates at Maidan around the Independence Monument, and the symbol-concept "positive energy" that has to be renewed at Maidan after clashes.

Moreover, there are some other worthwhile differences in symbols between the Ukrainian and Polish media. The Polish publications, inter alia, use the symbol-concepts "freedom" and "solidarity". They are absent in the coded symbols of the Ukrainian media. Meanwhile, "Ukrainian Weekly" appeals to the symbol-concept "dignity" that is not mentioned by the Polish media. We can assume that the symbols

of "solidarity", "freedom", "dignity" have the intuition of the same pure idea in its foundation. This could show that different cultural and historical contexts, even neighboring and co-influenced, have own authentic ranges of concepts applicable for the descriptions of the same events.

So, the correspondence between the visibility of certain symbols used in media and the specificity of experience, as well as differences in conceptions and concepts, prove that media, just as people, think in symbols, as Susanne Langer (1954) postulates it.

Figure 2. Visibility of different symbols in the symbolic representations of Maidan by the Polish press (N=239).
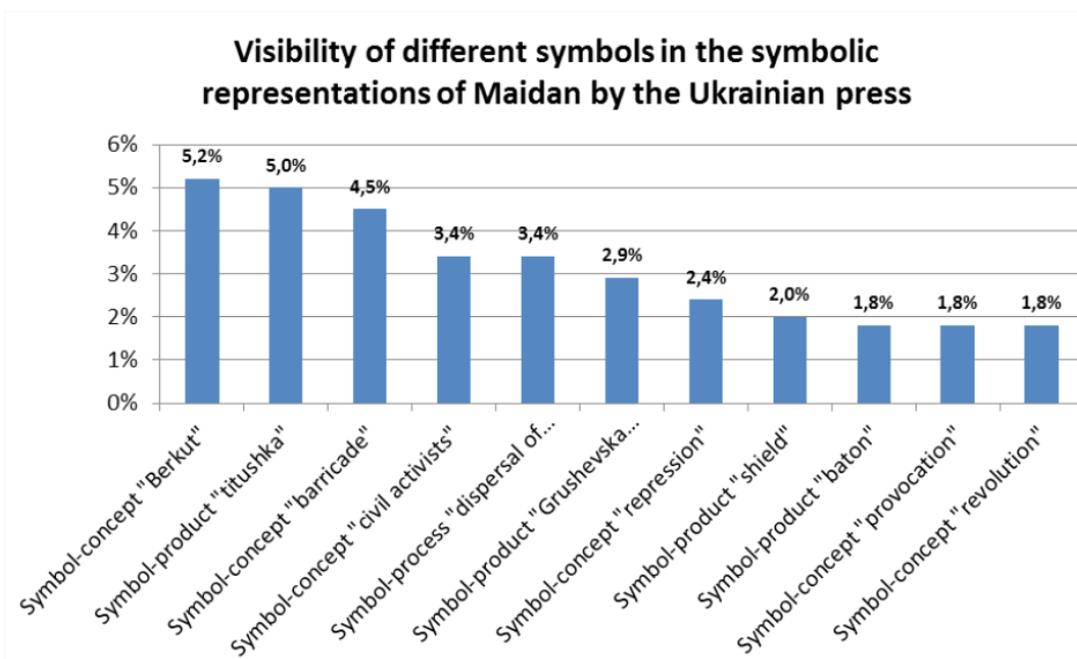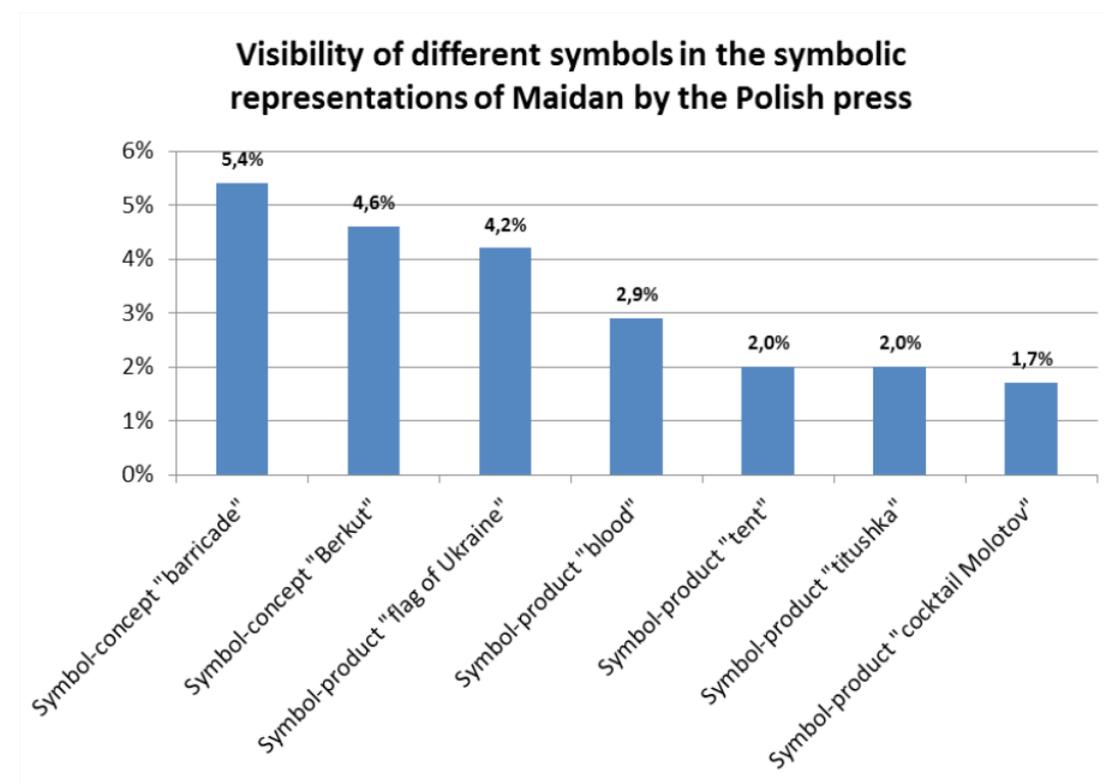

Figure 1. Visibility of different symbols in the symbolic representations of Maidan by the Ukrainian press (N=383).

The Figures 3 and 4 visualizes what symbols are the most visible in the general amount of the coded symbols in terms of their types in the Ukrainian and Polish press under study. For example, the most visible symbol-situations in the Ukrainian press are "opposition lost in four constituencies", "repressions against Automaidan", and "negotiations between power and opposition". Just one of them is related to violence. The other two imply the relations of power and opposition. We can see that in the Polish press all most visible

symbol-situations are violence-related: "dead, wounded people lying on the ground", "Ukraine is bleeding", and "opposition leader (Vitali Klitschko) attacked by protesters". The only recurrent symbol-processes in the Polish media coverage of Maidan, namely, "dispersal of Maidan" and "war with own people", also have the significations of violence, conflict escalation, terror, suppression, civil war. These Figures also demonstrate the dominance of symbol-products and symbol-concepts over symbol-situations and symbol-processes.

Figure 3. Visibility of different symbols by their types in the Ukrainian press: the most visible symbol-products, symbol-concepts, symbol-situations, and symbol-process (N=383).
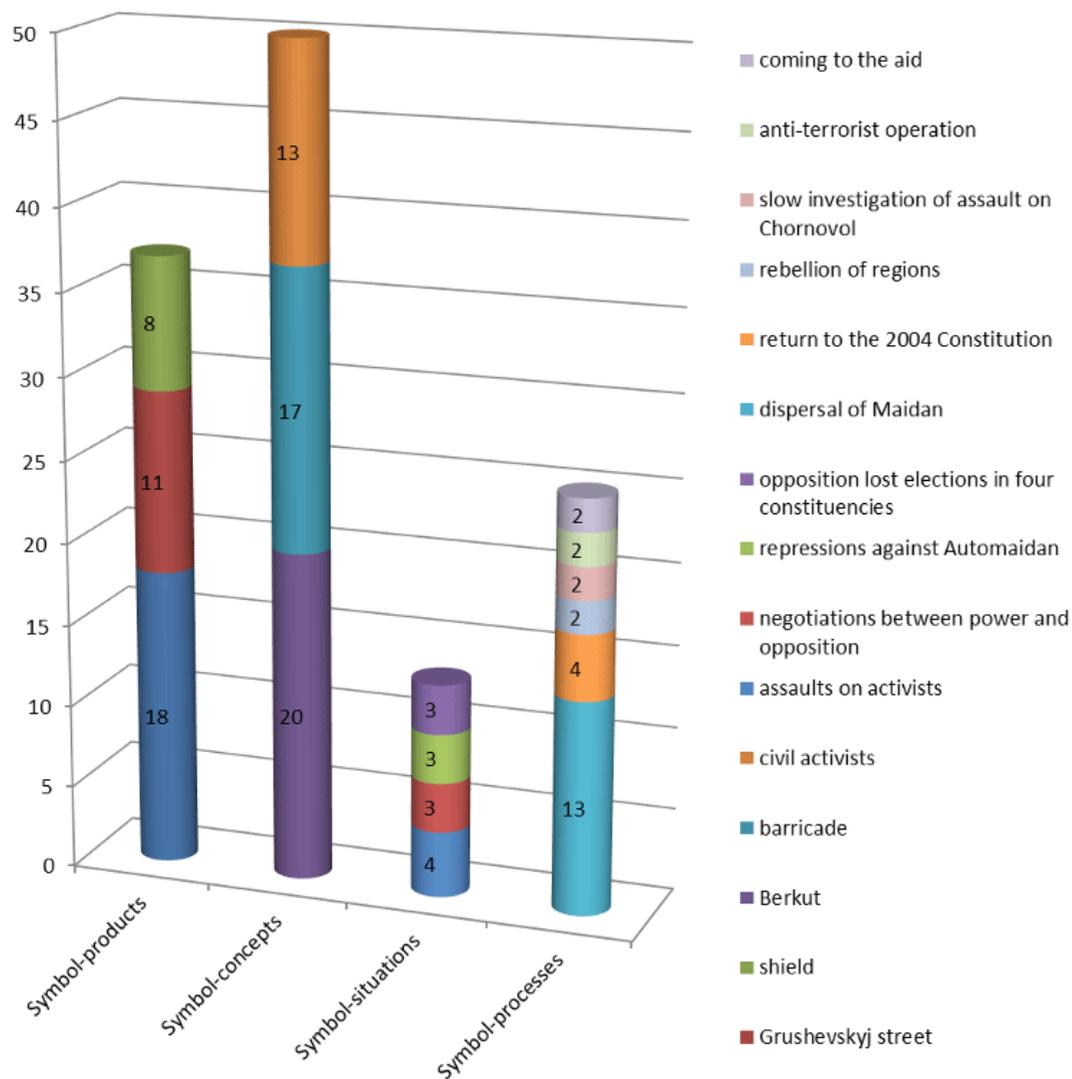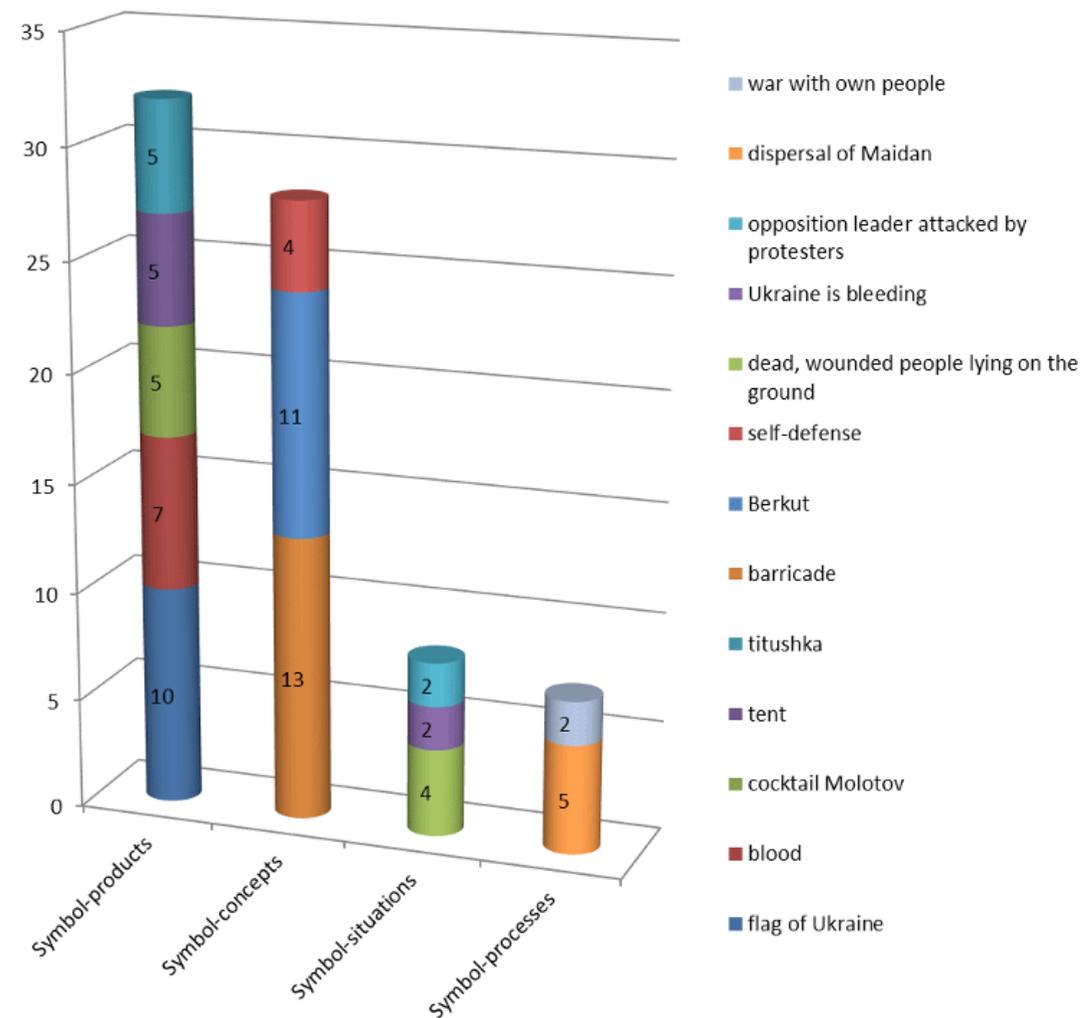

Figure 4. Visibility of different symbols by their types in the Polish press: the most visible symbol-products, symbol-concepts, symbol-situations, and symbol-process (N=239).

We identified nine most visible symbols in the amount of 107 separately coded symbols in the Ukrainian tabloid. The rest of symbols are coded two and less times. Among them there is just one symbol-situation "dispersal of Maidan". All of them, except symbol-product "stele", are directly related to violence. The same measure is provided for the Polish tabloid "Fakt". There are six most visible symbols in the amount of 133 coded symbols in this publication. The rest of symbols are coded three and less times. Among these six symbols there is one symbol-situation "dead, wounded people lying on the ground". Three of the rest of five symbols are violence-related: symbol-product "Berkut", "barricade", "blood".

Figure 5. Visibility of different symbols in the symbolic representations of Maidan by the tabloid newspaper "Segodnia" (N=107).
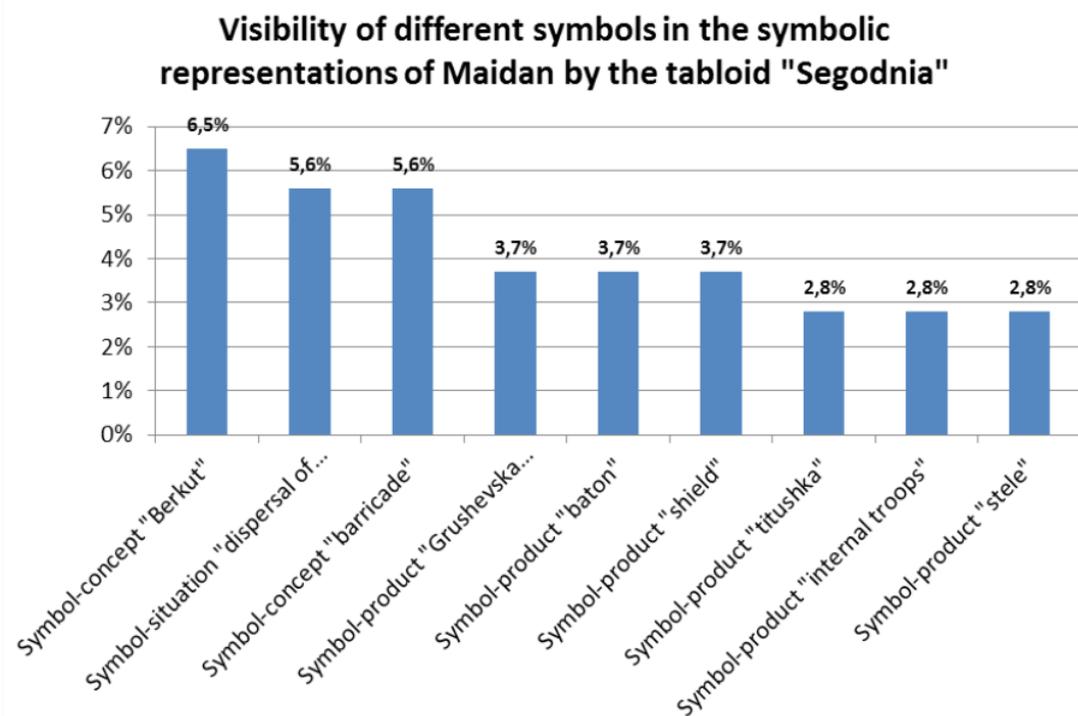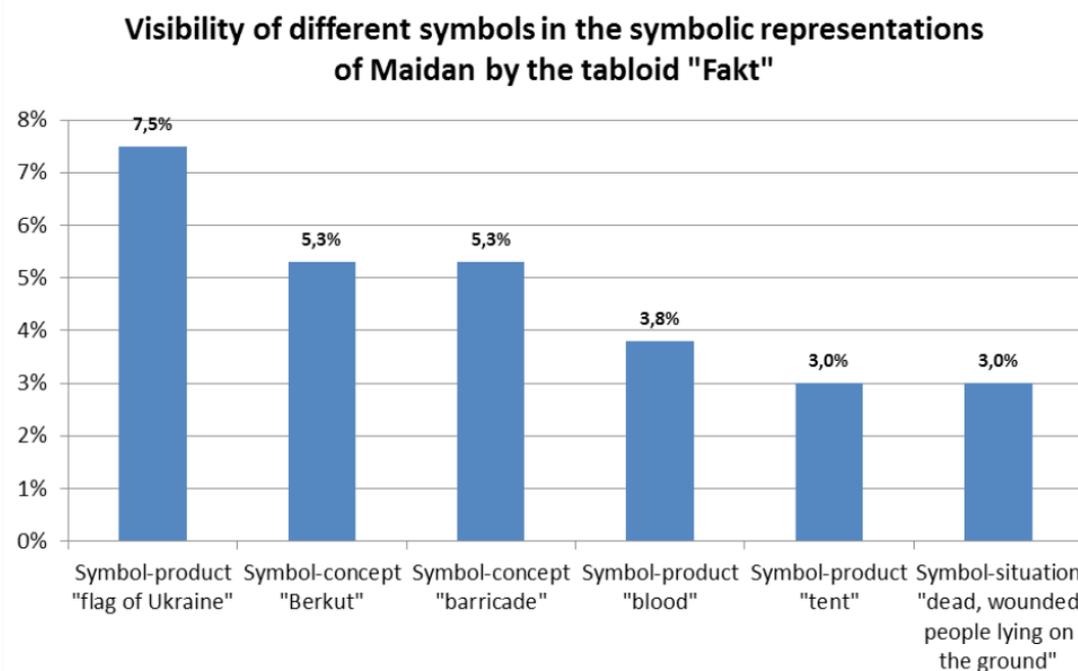

Figure 6. Visibility of different symbols in the symbolic representations of Maidan by the tabloid newspaper "Fakt" (N=133).

Out of ten most visible symbols in the amount of 276 coded symbols in "Ukrainian Weekly" only one symbol "civil activists" has no connotation of violence. Two out of eight most visible symbols in "Polityka" convey no implicit or explicit meanings of violence, namely, symbol-product "Association Agreement" and symbol-concept "snap elections". We did not manage to code these two concepts as symbols in the Ukrainian publications. They simply did not focus on these concepts in their coverage. Meanwhile, for the Polish press it was important to explain to their readers the historical significance of this agreement and the importance of protesters' demands, namely, the demand of snap presidential and parliamentary elections.

Figure 7. Visibility of different symbols in the symbolic representations of Maidan by the quality weekly newsmagazine "Ukrainian Weekly" (N=276).
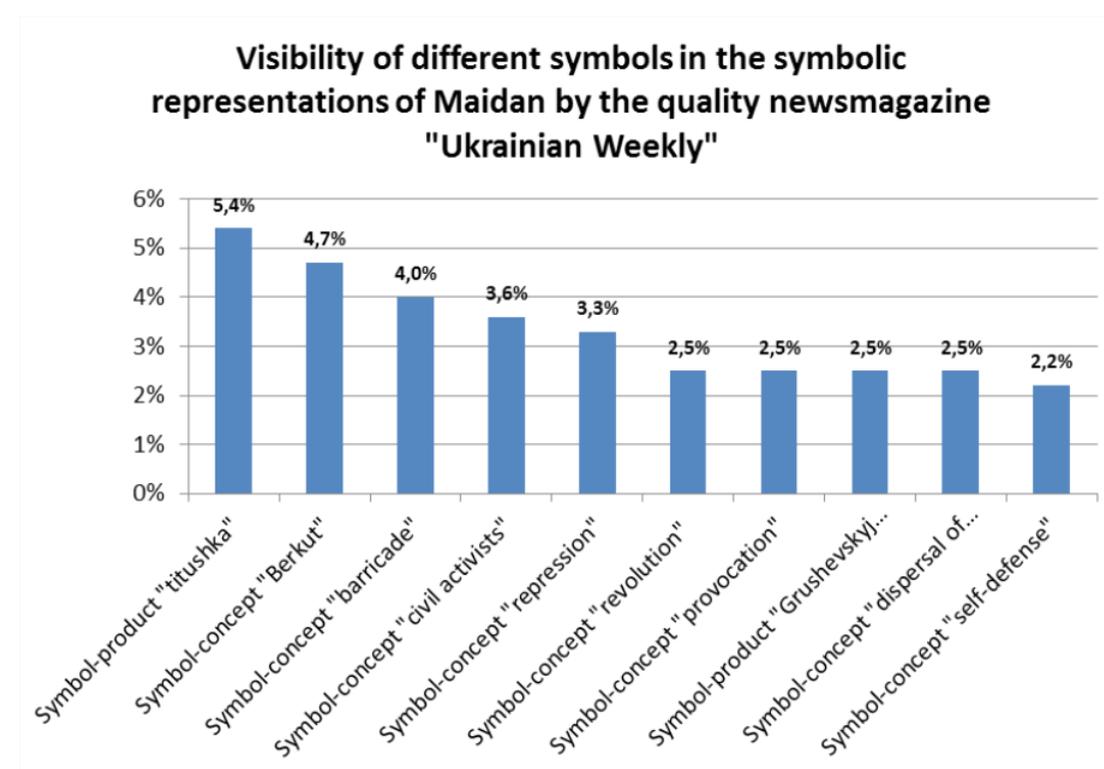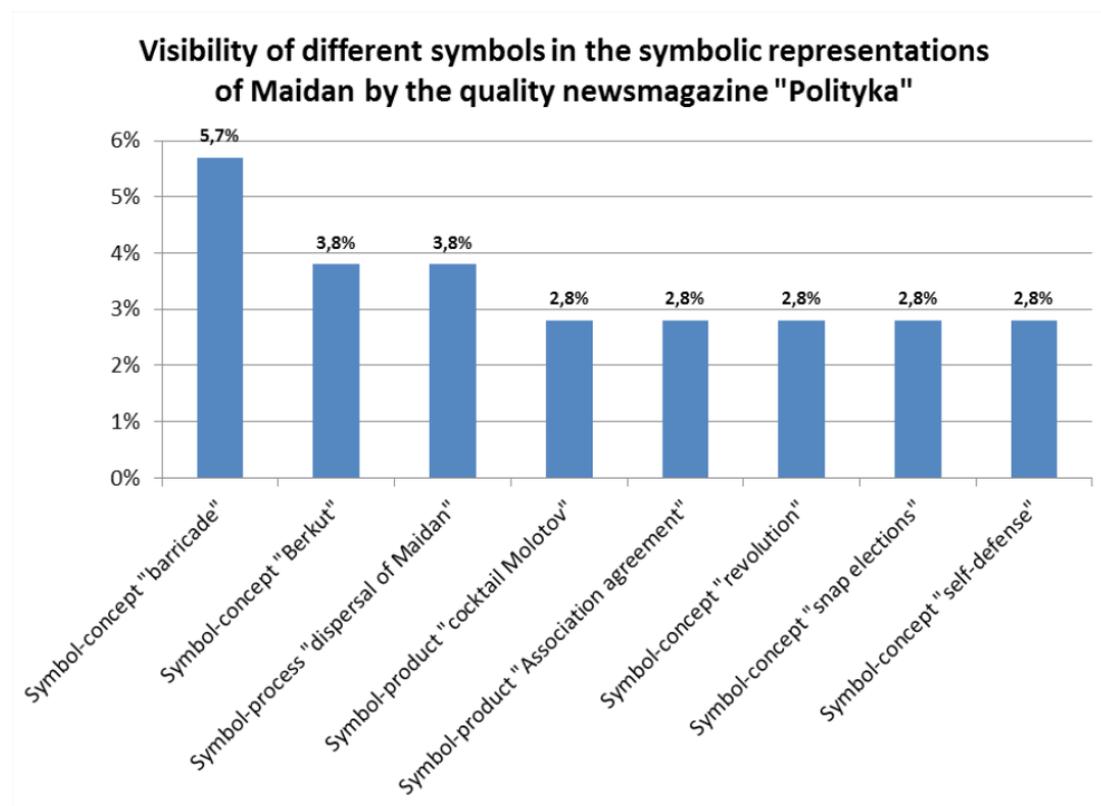
Figure 8. Visibility of different symbols in the symbolic representations of Maidan by the quality weekly newsmagazine "Polityka" (N=106).

Conclusion

Maidan as a grassroots movement and longstanding protest has characteristics which are the most attractive to media: violence, deviance, drama, and spectacle. In practice, this leads to the extensive coverage of such events by media. Meanings that could be identified and interpreted in media reports on Maidan contribute to the general understanding of media functioning, cultural contexts, social experience, and structural relations of power and subordination in a particular society. We attempted to decipher the meanings that media convey in their reporting of Maidan through the lenses of symbols as an interpretative device. The philosophy of symbolic forms by Ernst Cassirer and the symbol theory of his follower Susanne Langer allow to work out the five-term typology of symbols: symbol-products, symbol-concepts, symbol-slogans, symbol-situations, and symbol-processes. The content analysis of the news stories in the leading Ukrainian and Polish tabloid and quality publications revealed the dominance of symbol-products, symbol-concepts over symbol-processes both in the Ukrainian and Polish media. In practice, it means that in reporting of protests media, especially tabloids, cover any social experience through physical objects, material things, some common sense, stereotypical concepts of life. However, it does not help people to get information-oriented understandings of situationality, historicity,

temporality of experiences, as well as processes. At the end the journalism of processes is rather an ideal than reality. However, it is noteworthy that the Polish tabloid "Fakt" uses more symbol-situations in its reporting than the quality newsmagazine "Polityka" for the same period under study and the coverage of the same events, and the Ukrainian newsmagazine "Ukrainian Weekly" still extensively describes processes with symbolic meanings.

Ten most visible symbols in the Ukrainian media include the symbol-concept "Berkut", the symbol-product "titushka", the symbol-concept "barricade", the symbol-concept "civil activists", the symbol-process "dispersal of Maidan", the symbol-product "Grushevskyj street", the symbol-concept "repression", the symbol-product "baton", the symbol-concept "revolution", the symbol-concept "provocation", and the symbol-product "shield". In the Polish press the most visible symbols are as follows: the symbol-concept "barricade", the symbol-concept "Berkut", the symbol-product "flag of Ukraine", the symbol-product "blood", the symbol-product "cocktail Molotov", the symbol-product "tent", the symbol-product "titushka". So, three most visible symbols coincide in the Ukrainian and Polish press, namely, the symbol-concept "Berkut", the symbol-concept "barricade", and the symbol-product "titushka". They all convey the meanings of conflict, its escalation, and violence.

Some symbols with the similar objects, symbol-vehicles and subjects are characterized with divergent conceptions and concepts in the Ukrainian tabloid and quality press. The example is the symbol-concept "compromise": for "Segodnia" this symbol means the unavoidable reconciliation between power and opposition in which protesters are passive observers while for "Ukrainian Weekly" it means the unreachable, unattainable goals under the real life circumstances of Maidan. In the Polish press the connotation of this symbol is closer

to the "Ukrainian Weekly's": its "compromise" is something that would lead to the reconciliation only if all demands of protesters are met, including snap elections. This demonstrates how, depending on the political leanings, ideological predispositions, which could be linked with the media ownership, and national historical narratives, media could endow the same signs with contrasted or at least substantially different conceptions and concepts.

Although the Polish tabloids are criticized for commercialization that might lead to superficiality in the coverage, "Fakt" provides more contextualized, fact-oriented, and elaborate symbols than the Ukrainian tabloid "Segodnia".

Moreover, there are some other variations in symbols between the Ukrainian and Polish media. The Polish publications rely on the symbol-concepts "freedom" and "solidarity". They are absent in the coded symbols of the Ukrainian media. Meanwhile, "Ukrainian Weekly" appeals to the symbol-concept "dignity" that is not mentioned by the Polish media. We can assume that symbols of "solidarity", "freedom", "dignity" have the intuition of the same pure idea in its foundation. The Ukrainian tabloid does not use none of these symbols.

Overall, the elaborate analysis of symbols in media texts help to investigate the representations of the complex reality and common universalities of culture within different national and cultural contexts. We found similarities in the most visible symbols in the Ukrainian and Polish media. The differences are identifiable in nuances of interpretations of less visible symbols. 👁

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Symboliczne reprezentacje Majdanu w prasie ukraińskiej i polskiej. Analiza porównawcza

Streszczenie:

W niniejszym artykule przedstawiono wyniki analizy porównawczej reprezentacji symbolicznych Majdanu w prasie ukraińskiej oraz polskiej, w tym reprezentacji obecnych zarówno w tabloidach, jak i w tygodnikach opinii. Przedmiotem badania stały się różne typy symboli (tj. symbole-produkty, symbole-koncepty, symbole-slogany, symbole-sytuacje, symbole-procesy, działania symboliczne), wyodrębnione w oparciu o filozofię form symbolicznych Ernsta Cassirera oraz teorię symboli Susanne Langer, identyfikowane w reportażach i artykułach publicystycznych poświęconych wydarzeniom, jakie miały miejsce na Majdanie Niezależności w Kijowie w czasie Rewolucji Godności. Dzięki analizie zawartości tych tekstów udało się ustalić, że najbardziej widoczne symbole są, i w prasie ukraińskiej, i w prasie polskiej, podobne. Wśród nich należy wymienić: „barykadę" (symbol-koncept), „Berkut" (symbol-koncept), „rozpędzenie Majdanu" (symbol-proces). Ponadto w prasie polskiej dostrzeżono symbole, jak też idee i pojęcia je wyrażające, nieobecne w prasie ukraińskiej, w tym: „krew", „solidarność" i „wolność".

Słowa kluczowe:

reprezentacja symboliczna, Majdan, tabloid, prasa opiniotwórcza, symbol-produkt, symbol-koncept, symbol-sytuacja, symbol-proces, działania symboliczne.